

SOCRATES

GRUNDTVIG 2

“Learning Partnership” Programme Framework



HOW TO INVOLVE WOMEN IN SOCIETY

GRIP

Research report

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Deadline for the missing parts: latest 15th of July

Leaflet = guide – in the national languages and offers guidance for women (e.g. unemployed, low income, immigrants) to find support, information and data for their active participation in the society, e.g. employment activation – deadline end of July

INTRODUCTION

A majority of the 60 million people living in poverty in the EU are women. Women all across Europe bear more than their fair share of job market discrimination, worsening social security benefits, access to training and health care. The ultimate goal is, on the basis of the statistics available, to bring the employment rate (which currently stands at an average of 61 %) up to a level which is as near as possible to 70 % by 2010 and to increase the proportion of working women (currently an average of 51 %) to over 60 % by 2010. The Heads of State or Government said that an average economic growth rate of around 3 % should be a realistic prospect for the coming years, if the measures they had adopted in Lisbon were implemented against a sound macroeconomic background.

The contributions that women make to the economic, social, and political life of their nations, communities, families and the next generation makes them key actors in effective development. More than 800 million women are economically active worldwide - in agriculture, small and micro enterprise, and, increasingly, in the export processing industries that drive globalization. Over 70 percent of these women live in the developing regions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Women's unemployment rates remain high relative to those of men, and when employed, they are paid less than men for the same work. It is not surprising, then, that women constitute 60 percent of the rural poor. Limitations on women's legal rights and participation in civil society are widespread. Men still largely occupy political leadership positions although women have increasingly provided dynamic leadership in the nongovernmental (NGO) and small enterprise sectors. Legal restrictions on women's land and property ownership continue to hamper women's ability to acquire productive assets and to reduce their vulnerability when family or other crises affect them. Girls' education has been shown to have a dramatic impact on women's earning power and on families' welfare but progress toward gender equity in education still lags, both in absolute terms and relative to those of boys.

Conflict and crisis appears to have a disproportionate impact on women. Not only do they suffer the immediate impacts of the conflict including violence, loss of income and displacement, but also women must try to provide for and protect their families, as well as themselves from starvation, rape, trafficking, bodily harm and disease.

Promoting a stronger and more productive role for women in development demands a broad and flexible approach. Women and men participate in the labor force in different proportions and have a different distribution across various types of employment. In general, proportionately fewer women than men are in paid employment at all ages. Women, more frequently than men, are found in the service sector, and less frequently in the industrial sector. The most common employment status for both women and men is "employee". Among those who are in employment, women are more likely to be "family workers" and less likely to be "employers" or "self-employed". In all countries, men dominate in crafts and trade, and women in service and

clerical occupations. Women are more often unpaid family workers, in temporary or part-time jobs, or in the informal sector without job security. By the same token, men generally have more stable jobs and more often at a managerial or senior level, than women. Time use studies in the ECE region show that women spend much more time than men in unpaid work, often more than twice as much. Men, on the other hand spend more time in paid employment. Women's reproductive roles and discriminatory perceptions of the value of women vs. men in the labor market are important factors shaping this trend. Majority of women in the countries where female "inactivity rates" [i.e. not in the labor force] are among the highest in the ECE region (e.g. Turkey, Greece, Ireland, Switzerland: 60-80%) cite 'homemaking' as the reason for not working. Having at least one pre-school child at home affects women's labor force participation negatively and men's positively, and both parents tend to register a higher proportion of their time in unpaid work.

While women's participation in the labor force in Europe and North America has increased, and in return, gender gap in the labor market shrunk in recent decades, women generally still have less salaries, career opportunities and authority than men. The provision for maternity and paternity leave combined with universal welfare benefits contribute to the creation of a more equal society, where men and women can fulfill their responsibilities at work and in the family on the basis of equity. This is of critical importance for the shaping of policies on labor market participation.

Despite the trend towards more equal numbers of female and male students in higher education, young women and men often choose different subjects to study. Gender-based stereotypes still influence choices in education, as well as parental views of what they expect from their children. These stereotypes discourage women's enrolment in fields traditionally regarded as "men's fields", and encourage girls to pursue fields that are traditionally seen as more suitable to women as mothers and caregivers. By the same token, these stereotypes largely discourage men to pursue fields that are seen as traditionally female, such as nursing. Gender-based stereotypes in school curricula, textbooks, and teachers' attitudes also affect a student's future choice in determining his/her field of study and occupation.

Some subject areas are still highly segregated according to sex. For example, all through the ECE region, women are more likely to choose fields such as humanities and arts, education and medicine (including nursing), while men are more likely to choose to study engineering, mathematics, natural sciences and computing. The greatest gender balance among graduates seems to be in legal and commercial studies.

The relatively new information and communication technologies may broaden and deepen existing educational and economic gaps between women and men. Currently, women are less likely than men to be employed in the ITC industry, and are more likely to lack the computer skills required for accessing jobs in the information and communication technologies. Moreover, even where women's access to the Internet is rising and their role as consumers is

becoming stronger, women's presence in the ITC market as producers is still scarce.

Various studies that have been made on women's access to ICT have shown that among practical obstacles for women in Eastern Europe to accessing the Internet is poor infrastructure, while women in Northern Europe have emphasized lack of training.

In most European countries, the adult female population is less educated than their male counterparts, which puts women at a disadvantage when it comes to accessing positions with higher wages and prestige, among other things. However, this seems to be changing considerably with the younger generation. Evidence shows that when women have higher education than men, this does not always translate into better paid or higher level employment for women.

Enrolment ratios are commonly used to evaluate the current educational situation by looking at those who are presently being educated. In general, the enrolment ratios show that there are no significant differences in secondary enrolment between girls and boys. However, some gender differences appear at the upper secondary level (which gives access to university), where girls' enrolment ratios are proportionally higher than boys'.

Significant changes in the world economy, such as rapid globalization and fast-paced technological progress, have shaped the economic realities of women and men in different ways. Women comprise an increasing share of the labour force in almost all regions of the world, and in many countries in the ECE countries this has translated into a more equal status of women and men. However, women generally still suffer worse economic conditions than do men, although this is to a varying degree within, and between the countries of the ECE. Furthermore, the speed and scope of the economic transition in the 1990s in the CEE and CIS has had profound effects on gender relations and the lives of men and women in these countries. Poverty rose from 14 million people living on less than \$4 a day in 1989 in the transition countries, to 147 million in mid-1990s, resulting in serious social fallout and inequalities. Women absorbed a disproportionately large share of employment cuts under transition, and the wage gap created under market conditions had increasingly negative impact on women's economic situation.

Women and men's access to economic resources is reflected in their participation in the workforce, the types of jobs they have, their working hours, the pay they receive and related social security. Women and men's social position, gender roles, property rights and other statutory and customary rights also play a crucial role in defining the economic status of women and men. The following key issues underline some of the main gender issues related to work and the economy:

<i>Labour force participation & type of work</i>	The gap between women and men's participation in the labour force is wide in many countries of the region. Women and men do not have equal access to paid work over their lifespan, with women experiencing more variations in connection with their reproductive years.
<i>Labour market segregation</i>	Women and men are concentrated in different sectors and occupations, often due to sex-based stereotypes. This can affect the economic and social security of individuals and families, usually to the detriment for women.
<i>Unemployment</i>	Women are often the first to be affected when job opportunities are lacking and more women than men are unemployed in the ECE region.
<i>Entrepreneurship</i>	In recent years, more women have become entrepreneurs in the micro, small and medium size enterprise sector, even though the number of women-entrepreneurs is still considerably lower compared to men entrepreneurs in the countries of the region. In some of the transition economies, the number of women entrepreneurs has increased considerably.

In industrial countries about a third or even, in Sweden, more than half of the adult population is involved every year in some form of adult learning or continuing education.

Adult education is organized, financed or sponsored by authorities or employers, but is also often self-financed. In general, there does not seem to be much difference in the proportions of adult women and men participating in some form of education and training, with few exceptions. However, the apparent similarity according to existing statistics in the proportion of women and men in adult education may of course hide a much more varied picture. If the type of education, its duration, source of financing, and subject could be ascertained and studied, some divergence may appear.

Studies show that the main financier of adult education seems to be the employer. The second source of financing is the individuals and then comes the state. Therefore it is possible to get some help with funding at local or national level; but aid coming from the companies is considered as the main financing source for men, whereas individual financing is considered as the main means of financing education for women. All this is linked to the actual state of society and the unevenness between men and women.

There are also differences between big companies and small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs. SMEs are the main creators of jobs in our societies. However, those companies participate less than big companies in the financing of adult learning. There is a growing gap between the people who have got the income to get education and those who have not. This

contributes to widening the gap between those who are in and those who are out of the educational society and this is quite a challenge. But, and this is my second point, the uneven development of adult learning should not hide another phenomenon - the growth in demand for education among men and women in industrial countries.

If you look at the growth in demand, we are now reaching a historical moment. The potential of the players in the economy have a strategic importance these days. There are uncertainties at economic level, at social level and the cultural level. These represent all opportunities and this is why the civil society is becoming critical for the future economic, social democratic future of post-industrial societies. The autonomy of individuals is not only a name; it is a precondition in advanced society. The individual must understand technical information, must be able to use the expertise that exists through local communities, through local unions, through the local authorities etc.

To produce things today is to ask questions in order to improve. Production is not only formal production it is intelligent men and women that have a potential and want to develop their creativity. ***You cannot face up to today's challenges without developing the skills and the active participation of the individuals, employees in companies but also citizens in society.***

You cannot have solutions to environmental risks if the local communities are not stronger, if they are not part of the civil society and if they cannot act in that civil society. Racism cannot be dealt with by forbidding it either. You have to deal with it from the inside of civil societies, through education, through the action of those civil societies. We are talking about democratizing democracy: that means the citizen must be stronger, there should be a new culture of citizenship. The right of the individual is not defined at the level of parliament but at each level of society.

The new policies of education and adult learning are not first and foremost educational policies. If you want active policies for the labour market, active policies in the health field, active policies at the level of sustainable development, these new policies will have to be reflected in the new policies in education.

We must not forget either the role of the state in the provision of education and the main point is partnership. It is a new phenomenon. It has become obvious that the Ministries have to work in partnership and we are seeing this partnership idea developing, partnerships with the labour market, and partnerships with the union movement. Trade unions in Europe have an extremely important role to play because the associative life can generate all sorts of training activities. In Europe millions of people get some training, get some education through trade unions. It is estimated that one citizen out of 7 in Europe takes part in education through trade unions, but it is also important to look at the new role of the state.

There are emerging active and educational societies in Europe but these educational societies could be lifelong learning societies that would mean that

their population must repetitively have access to new knowledge, to new technologies, but it could also be a society that transmits knowledge on a continuous basis. The Europe of Knowledge is rather an ambiguous expression because an emerging educational society can be a truly integrated active society that focuses on the player. Instead of the Europe of Knowledge, what I would have liked to see was *Europe of Creative Active Citizens*.

An active civil society is the gathering of active individuals that have and enormous creative potential. It is a society, which has an active economy that can negotiate within its self more equal share of the wealth. An active civil society is also a society that acts, that thinks and that frees the potential of productive forces within itself, the core of a lifelong learning policy.

However the increased imperative for individual citizens continually to develop their skills and knowledge to enable them to participate in complex modern societies should draw our attention to the increasing gap between 'those who know and those who do not know'. All the evidence suggests that those who participate in lifelong learning are those who were successful in their initial and further education, while those who left school without qualifications have far fewer chances to gain access in adulthood.

In different Member States there are different levels of participation of adults in continuing training - however in all Member States the participation rate of those who continued their education to aged 20 or more is at least 3 times higher than the early leavers. As one contributor to the Kennedy Report said, 'If at first you don't succeed - you don't succeed.' However, the consequences of this lack of continuing education and training are becoming more serious. Within the space of a generation the inequalities between the have and have-nots in terms of qualifications have grown. The unqualified are more likely to be the long-term unemployed, or be in poorly paid insecure employment, and less likely to vote or participate in civil society. Their talents go to waste.

Recent statistics from Eurostat illustrate the different rates of unemployment in the EU countries for adults - men and woman who have completed different levels of education. The talents of very many of our European citizens are going to waste - and this is a serious problem for us all, because with an ageing population, we cannot rely only on the young recently educated or the older well educated to take on the new challenge of change. To build a socially cohesive and economically sustainable Europe we need the talents and contributions of everyone. We need to develop structures of opportunity for the current non-participants to enter and re-enter learning. Recent statistics from Eurostat again illustrate the lower levels of training received by employed adults aged 30 and over depending upon their level of initial education.

If the learning society is to be a reality, the ownership of education and training should no longer be seen as the monopoly of schools, colleges, universities and training bodies. More learning takes place outside of these institutions and in a variety of settings, including the home, the community and the workplace. If we are going to build an inclusive learning society, which is

accessible to all, more people must be involved and there must be a rethinking of roles, purposes, responsibilities and the use of resources. ***New local learning partnerships are needed between learners, teachers and trainers, schools and universities, local and regional governments, non-governmental and community organizations, trade unions and employers, including small enterprises.***

Such partnerships have the potential to involve many groups of learners, including the current non-participants, in neighbourhoods, workplaces in organizations, and to use a range of resources, expertise, premises and modern technology. Such partners can work together to provide pathways for progression, a diverse and rich range of accessible opportunities and incentives to learn. They can provide continual chances to learn at all stages and ages of life involving children, parents, grandparents, young people, the employed the unemployed, rural and urban communities, the skilled and the unskilled.

The extent of societal changes has been very deep indeed. Several times we have approached the globalization of the economy and all its manifestations: the capital and mobility of labour, the very increase in competitiveness of the market economy internationally and so on. This globalization has been affected by the revolution in information and communication technologies which in turn is impacting on the accelerated pace of science and technology development. Again and again one thing is affecting another, there are variegated changes in: employment patterns; the nature of the employment force and workforce; the type of jobs available; the changing character of work itself; the kind of qualities and skills that are required in the modern workforce.

Demographic trends of various kinds have, of course, their own consequences and multiculturalism is a huge issue within the educational challenges facing many countries at the moment. The issue of social inclusion or exclusion is of fundamental significance for our society and for the future. We have to operate within this great global economy and free market, but also we must operate in such a way that environmental sustainability, civil culture and a range of other things that make the quality of life in society, can be protected. In short, how can we help citizens in the future to cope with these various and sometimes-contradictory forces coming upon them?

We are entering a period of greater uncertainty, great change and great flux. How we should cope and prepare for this has drawn the analysis of many governments and international groupings, for example, the OECD and the EU, in the 1990's. This work has drawn a unanimous conclusion that the only way forward, the only way we can respond to these kinds of fundamental challenges to our society is through lifelong learning.

The challenges are great but some of the tools that have come into our hands are unprecedented as well. *One of the great tools we now have is information and communications technology with the mobility and flexibility to take learning anywhere at any time.* This was never before the case in human history. The challenges of today can draw upon some of the mechanisms by which the challenges came into being to promote learning in many and varied

locations. The reality of this is already happening around us. In fact, learning today can be so much more diversified in its mechanisms, its methods and its locations.

One of the crucial things in winning the support and the interest of the people, and the kind of motivation of the people which is part of 'the selling job', is that ***lifelong learning is essentially a people-centred approach***. It is a centrally humane approach to social and individual development and accordingly there are many things there that can be tapped into that can elicit responses from people, provided that they are handled well and perhaps less patronizingly than would sometimes be the case. We are involving and promoting human resource development in sustaining the capacities for employability and re-training, the kind of skills required for the flexibility and mobility and so on in the changing work situation.

Obviously, improving the working environment and making it a learning environment is very central to the whole process, but so to is establishing lifelong learning as a norm for all of us. Many of us are lucky enough to have the skills to stay lifelong learners, but having it established as a norm within society at large can take away the stigma that sometimes, just sometimes, stays with aspects of adult education and its deficit model approach. If we are all adult learners and learners throughout life I believe that it opens up people's attitude much more significantly in this field.

Within the education system, each sector has to re-think its role, its function in relation to lifelong learning. Quite simply, it is not an adult education business that does not affect a secondary school teacher or primary teacher; lifelong learning affects us all. If we do not move it into that direction it will stay peripheral. We must see it as a permeating force and as a key issue that everybody involved in education and training is conscious of and conscious of the links between it and their sectors. Our various plans and policies must address this issue in terms of, 'What am I doing in relation in relation to lifelong learning, what is my role, what is my plan, what do I intend to do, how do I interpret it?'

In particular, one of the most vital things in the whole system is to use the lever of lifelong learning to do something we should be all doing anyway and that is promoting the importance of active constructivist learning.

Lifelong learning can also open up the business of certification and accreditation, shifting them beyond the traditional institutions without at the same time undermining or underestimating the significance of standards and appropriate processes. It can stimulate criteria for evaluating work and living experience. Some of the fields of future action could be:

- Time management
- Reading
- Note taking
- Test taking
- Motivation
- Information processing

- Memory
- Writing
- Self esteem
- Self motivation
- Foreign languages
- Self assessment tools
- Communication & public speaking
- Counseling

In the future, considering the societal changes taking place in Europe, women will play a more central and influential role in the development, leadership and management of regions and local communities as well as private business alongside with the men both in rural and urban context. Therefore is essential that we find methods of encouragement, motivation and implication of the rural and urban women with low income or unemployed in the future society. The differences existing between the two target groups (rural an urban women) will be analyzed in a comparative guide that will take into account the particularities of the mentioned disadvantaged groups.

In order to build and strengthen women's capacities, qualifications and self-confidence to enter the new, demanding domain of life traditionally dominated by men, and, thus, facilitate their participation in the decision-making and networking processes in both the public and private spheres of life, adult education is essential.

In this context, our study has tried to find answers and solutions to the question: "How to involve women in society?" and to create a methodological guide that will enable the main actors of the society to work with disadvantage women in their attempt to provide useful instruments for a better integration.

Our approach had several directions, thus in Romania the experts focused on women working in textile industry and in education, women that are in the risk of loosing their jobs, in Poland we worked with unemployed women and in Italy with immigrant women.

The project's objectives are as following:

- To identify the real needs of adult education for rural and urban women with low income or unemployed;
- To develop a comparative methodological guide regarding the steps that shall be taken by institutions / organizations dealing with women in their attempt to motivate them to accede adult education courses;
- To increase cooperation among organizations through Europe in the field of adult education and Life Long learning (LLL);
- To promote social dialogue with local stakeholder (owner, trade unions, training organizations, employment offices and responsible public offices).

NATIONAL CONTEXTS

2.1. Romanian national context

During the transition period, the condition of women in Romania has changed significantly. From certain points of view, their status is better than before 1989, but in other respects the changes have been negative. This section will briefly review the status of women in Romania, and the trends after 1989, so as to create a background for the overview of the status of rural women. It is not possible to analyze the condition of women in rural areas without making a comparison with the general context of women's lives in Romania, and with their common and specific characteristics.

THE SITUATION BEFORE 1989

The gender-related policy promoted by the Romanian Government before 1989, as in the other ex-communist countries, had two main goals:

- Full employment for those able to work and;
- Increasing the size of the population

(From Lohkamp–Himmighofen and Dienel, 2000).

The aim of the policy was to ensure women's high participation in the labor market, backed by measures in support of it, such as the establishment of childcare facilities on a large scale. But, even if the former régime encouraged women's employment, the policies did not take into consideration the need to share domestic work between men and women.

In this context, there was a double workload for Romanian women - paid work outside the house and unpaid work in the household. The former régime encouraged the participation of women in paid work outside the home, in the context of forced industrialization, because they constituted a cheaper workforce. However, there were many social benefits resulting from the condition of employee - such as maternal leave, pension, child allowances and access to childcare facilities (Cătălin Zamfir, 1999, p. 21). In addition, low income levels forced women to enter employment in order to ensure a decent living standard for their families: one salary was not enough for an ordinary family to meet its basic needs (Elena Zamfir and others, 1999, p. 276). In this context, women were "pushed" into the labor market, and received some aid for child rearing.

The socialist welfare state encouraged and ensured free access to all levels of education for the entire population. In this way, women's access to education was ensured without any discrimination. The result was a high degree of participation by women in education, especially at the higher levels. In 1986 women represented 44.5% of the university graduates ("The Status of Women in Romania 1980–1994", p. 44). This high standard of education allowed women to be employed in similar positions as men and offered them good opportunities to earn money. But this did not mean that all women attended secondary or postsecondary schools. Many of them, especially

those from the rural areas, quit school after the compulsory educational period (8 forms). Those women had lower income and a poor economic position.

With respect to the participation of women in political life, the former regime imposed quotas on women's representation (around 30%) in all political structures. In 1987, in the former Romanian Parliament (The Grand National Assembly), women were represented 34% while at governmental level, 5 ministers out of 40 were women (Monica Fong, 1996, pg. 39). But women's participation in political life was more decorative than effective (UNICEF, 1999, p. 94), because at the highest level of political decision-making within the Communist Party there were only 2 women out of 21 members of the Political Executive Office.

The situation of women before 1989 can be summarized as follows: high participation in the labour market, good opportunities for education, equal salaries with those of men, and formal political participation, and assuming household responsibilities.

STATUS OF WOMEN AFTER 1989

After 1989, women's position was redefined according to the changes undergone by society as a whole. Research on the status of women in Romania and in the other transition countries shows that women's situation improved in some aspects and worsened in others (UNICEF, 1999). This is a review of their status in Romania focusing on: employment; economic status; education; and political participation.

Employment

As shown in Table B-1, in the initial stage of the transition process, the unemployment rate for women was much higher than that for men. While the former kept a relatively high level, the more recent increases in unemployment among men resulted in almost equal unemployment rates for women and men by 1998. Among women, the unemployment rate is higher for younger women aged 15-24 years old. For this category, the unemployment rate in 1997 was 21.4% (as opposed to 17.3% for men) (UNDP, 1999, p. 91), and 49% of all women unemployed had a long-term unemployment status in 1997 (UNICEF, 1999, p. 28-29). In general, therefore, during the last 10 years, women have been more affected by unemployment than men.

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total rate	3.0	8.2	10.4	10.9	9.5	6.6	8.9	10.3
Male rate	2.2	6.2	8.1	9.0	7.9	5.7	8.5	10.2
Female rate	4.0	10.3	12.9	12.9	11.4	7.5	9.3	10.5

Source: National Human Development Report 2001-2002, p. 105

*Record from Labor Force Employment Offices.

Despite the high and rising unemployment rates among women after 1989, the number of economically active women has nevertheless also increased

(UNICEF, 1999). In addition, the proportion of women in the labor force increased from 46.1 % in 1990 to 47.7 % in 1994 (UNDP, 1999). There are many reasons for this increase in economic participation. Declining family incomes “pushed” women into becoming economically active in order to ensure a decent standard of living for the family.

In addition, many social benefits such as pension and maternity leave were only available for those who have been under formal employment. Therefore, the need for higher incomes and access to social benefits has made women more active in economic life.

While women may have become more economically active during transition, not all of them have been able to find work in the formal economy during the period of recession that occurred. The alternative to formal employment is, of course, the informal economy, but recent research by the Romanian Academic Society (SAR) on the informal economy and the survival strategies of the unemployed¹ shows that “women have less chances than men to find employment in the informal economy” (Mungiu-Pippidi, Ioniță, Mândruță, 1999, p. 12). There are several reasons for this. First, when unemployed, women are more likely to become housewives and take care of the children and the household. This is the way for women to go on working in the household and thus reduce some household expenses by their work. To be a housewife is not a stigmatized status for a woman. On the contrary, in the case of men, unemployment could force them out of active life, which pushes them to search alternative income sources in the informal economy. Moreover, the heavy nature of work in some parts of the informal sector (e.g., construction and transportation) is not thought to be suitable for women (idem, p.13).

The data presented by the SAR research are not applicable to all Romanian women, but it can help us get a picture of their involvement in the informal economy, and of the complexity of the situation.

There are indications that many are working without legal work contracts in trade and services, as secretaries or cleaners. Moreover, French, Bălăiță and Tică (1999) show that “many employees work in both formal, and informal sectors” (p. 5). In this context, women’s involvement in the informal sector does not refer only to their participation without a formal contract, but also to those employed in the formal economy who have a second job in the informal sector.

Changes in social policies have also affected women’s involvement in economic life following transition. One of these negative trends has been the significant decrease in the number of childcare facilities, with a resulting increase in the maintenance costs of the latter, especially in what concerns utilities provided by the private sector (E. Zamfir et al., 1999). This affects women’s availability to participate in economic life because, traditionally, women are the ones responsible for childrearing.

Women's employment possibilities can also be enhanced by social policies to encourage sharing of the housework between women and men. As shown above, the policy promoted by the former régime did not support the idea of sharing domestic work, even though it allowed for women's employment outside of the home. After 1990, certain laws have been adopted in order to involve men in children rearing. One example is the Law on Paternal Leave (No. 210/1999), which offers fathers the opportunity to benefit from a fifteen-day leave after the birth of their child.

%	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Agriculture	55.7	54.3	54.5	52.8	52.8	49.5	52.0	51.2
Industry	43.2	43.0	41.7	41.4	41.2	41.1	41.3	40.8
Commerce	58.8	57.2	54.9	51.8	54.0	53.4	53.4	52.7
Financial, banking and insurance services	65.4	72.1	66.9	67.7	68.9	69.9	66.5	69.8
Education	67.1	67.6	67.0	66.4	65.5	67.0	66.8	61.7
Health and social assistance	72.9	72.8	74.1	73.7	73.6	74.7	75.6	75.3

Source: National Human Development Report 2001-2002, p. 108

Records show that women participate mainly in some sectors of the economy, such as trade, financial and insurance services, education, health and social assistance (Table B-2), while men prevail in industry. In addition, women represent more than 70% of the unpaid family workers (Table B-3), which makes them more vulnerable to social risks, because they are not covered by any insurance scheme and they are dependent on the breadwinner of the family. At the same time, the percentage of women among employers is very low, with a slight decrease between 1995 and 1998 (Table B-3).

%	1995	1996	1997	1998
Employees	40.5	41.8	42.3	42.9
Employers	27.4	23.3	21.5	25.6
Self-employed	43.1	35.8	34.8	33.1
Unpaid family workers	74.8	70.6	71.6	71.0
Members of agricultural companies or cooperatives	46.2	40.0	38.7	27.4

Source: National Human Development Report 2001-2002, p. 108

Women's involvement in agricultural activities is quite high, for at least half of their total number. However, the percentage of women members of agricultural companies or cooperatives has decreased during transition. This could be partly explained by the increase of unemployment among men and the resulting high rate of urban-rural migration after 1990 (Sandu, 1998, p. 5), which has led to their enhanced involvement in agricultural activities. Agricultural workers get low incomes on a seasonal basis, without being covered by any insurance scheme (pensions, unemployment, health and

parental leaves, medical insurance). Therefore, women who work in the agricultural sector are more exposed to social risks.

In summary, there is a general trend for women to be employed in sectors such as trade, education and health (as well as prevailing in agriculture), where salaries are lower than in industry. An exception is the field of financial, banking and insurance services (where women are largely involved) – which offers the best salaries in the entire economic system. These women have a good economic position and status.

Education

The economic status of women and their position in the labor market are both affected by the **level of education**. There are two aspects that have to be mentioned here: the educational level of adult women who have gone through the whole educational process; and the school involvement of girls who have not yet completed their education.

With respect to adult women, the figures in Table B-4 show that the educational levels of women and of men are very similar. Most women have completed at least the compulsory education (secondary school) or high school. From this point of view, women enjoy equal opportunities with men in the labor market

Graduated level of education	Women (%)	Men (%)
University degree	2.8	2.5
High school	49.0	53.3
Secondary school	43.9	39.8
Primary school	3.2	3.5
Without primary school	1.1	0.9
Total	100	100

Source: The Census of population and dwellings 1992

With respect to school participation of girls, the figures indicate that the gross enrolment rate in primary school increased after 1989, while the one for secondary school dropped (Table B-5). Women's enrolment in universities has also increased. If these trends continue, they will result in two groups of adult women in the long run: one with a high level of education, with good employment opportunities and economic position; and another one with a very low level of education (only elementary education - four forms), with poor prospects in the labor market, and dependent on men and/or on social security services.

Political Participation

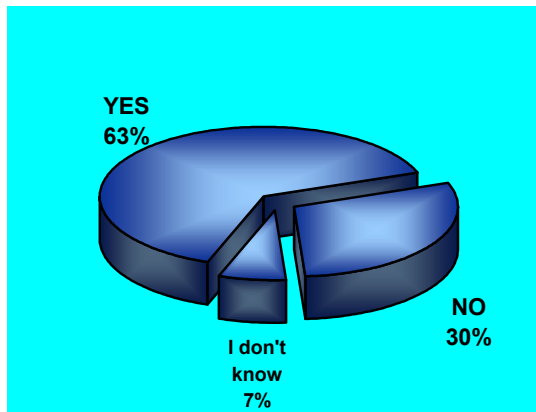
Women's participation in political life decreased sharply after 1990, as a result of giving up the quota system, which had been imposed by the communist régime. Thus, in 1997 in the Romanian Parliament only 7 percent of the members were women and in 1996, after the Legislative Elections, there were no women ministers (UNICEF, 1999, p. 100).

However, in the current Romanian Government, 5 out of 24 ministers are women.

In summary, it is noteworthy that women's overall situation in Romania has undergone variable changes. From some perspectives, these changes have been positive - women have become more active in the economy, and their participation in the highest level of education has increased during transition. But there are also some negative aspects, such as very high levels of unemployment, and a decrease in political participation.

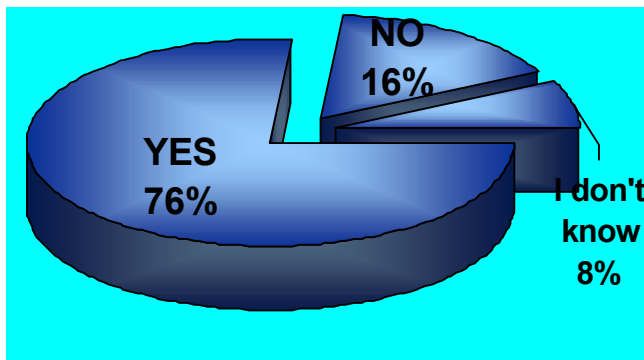
INFORMATION FROM THE GENDER BAROMETER, 2003 (OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION ROMANIA)

Q1: Is the woman's duty to take care of household more than the man?

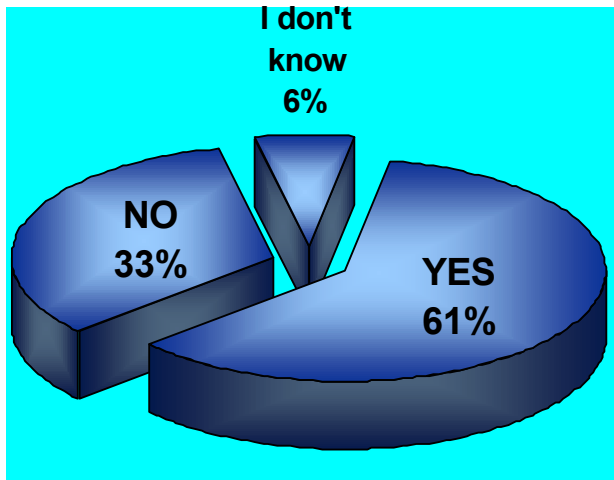


Q2: Is the woman's duty to take care of household more than the man?
(Education segmentation)

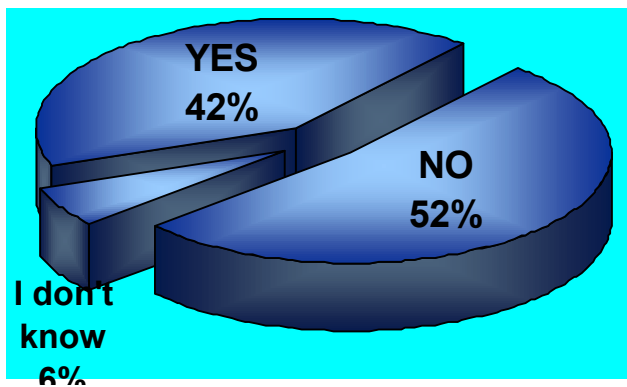
Primary education



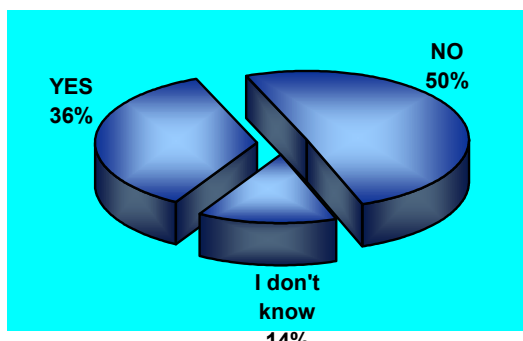
Secondary education



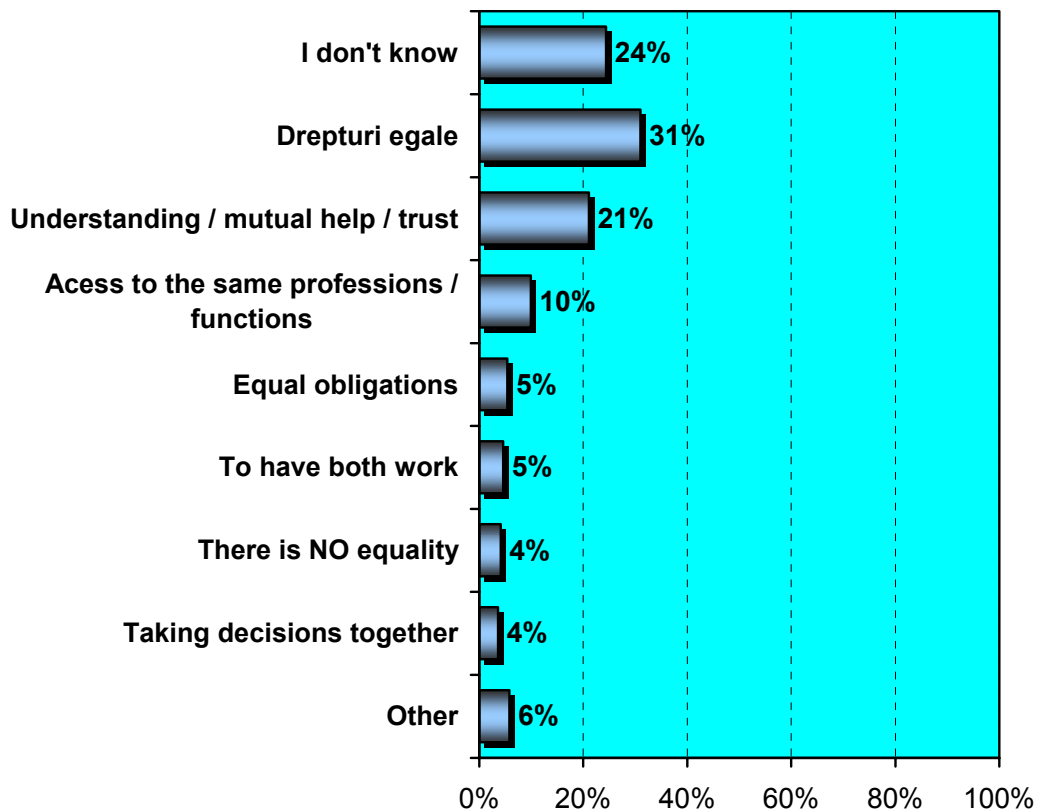
Higher education



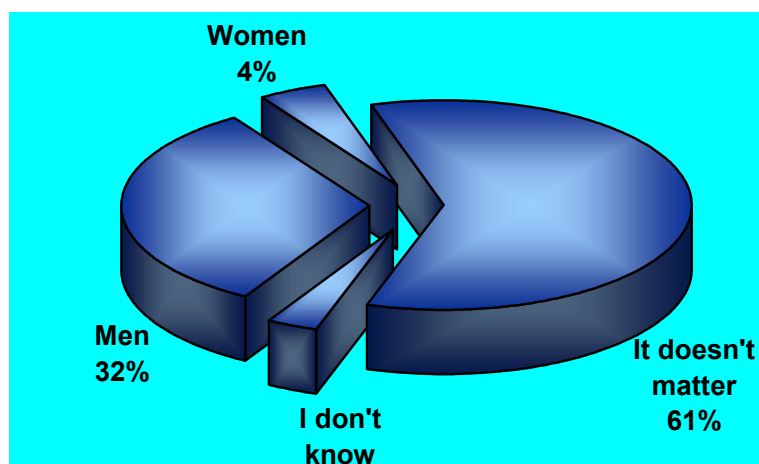
Q3: *Is there a real equality between women and men?*



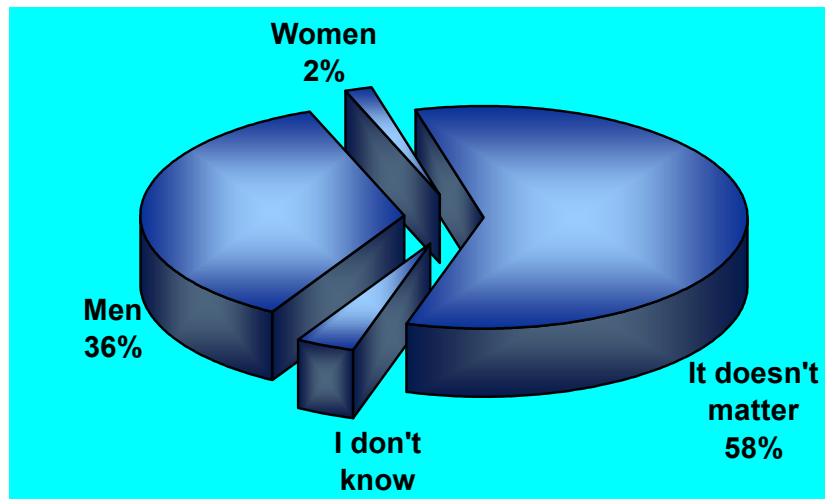
Q4: What do you understand under equality between men and women?



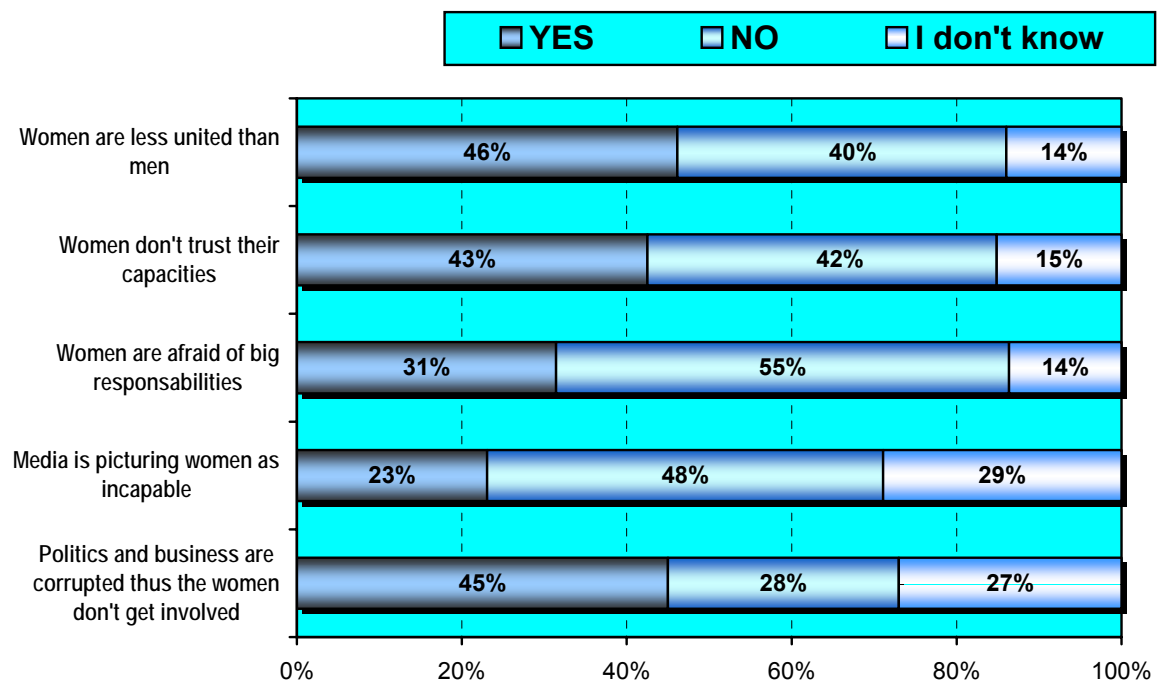
Q5: Who should lead your family?

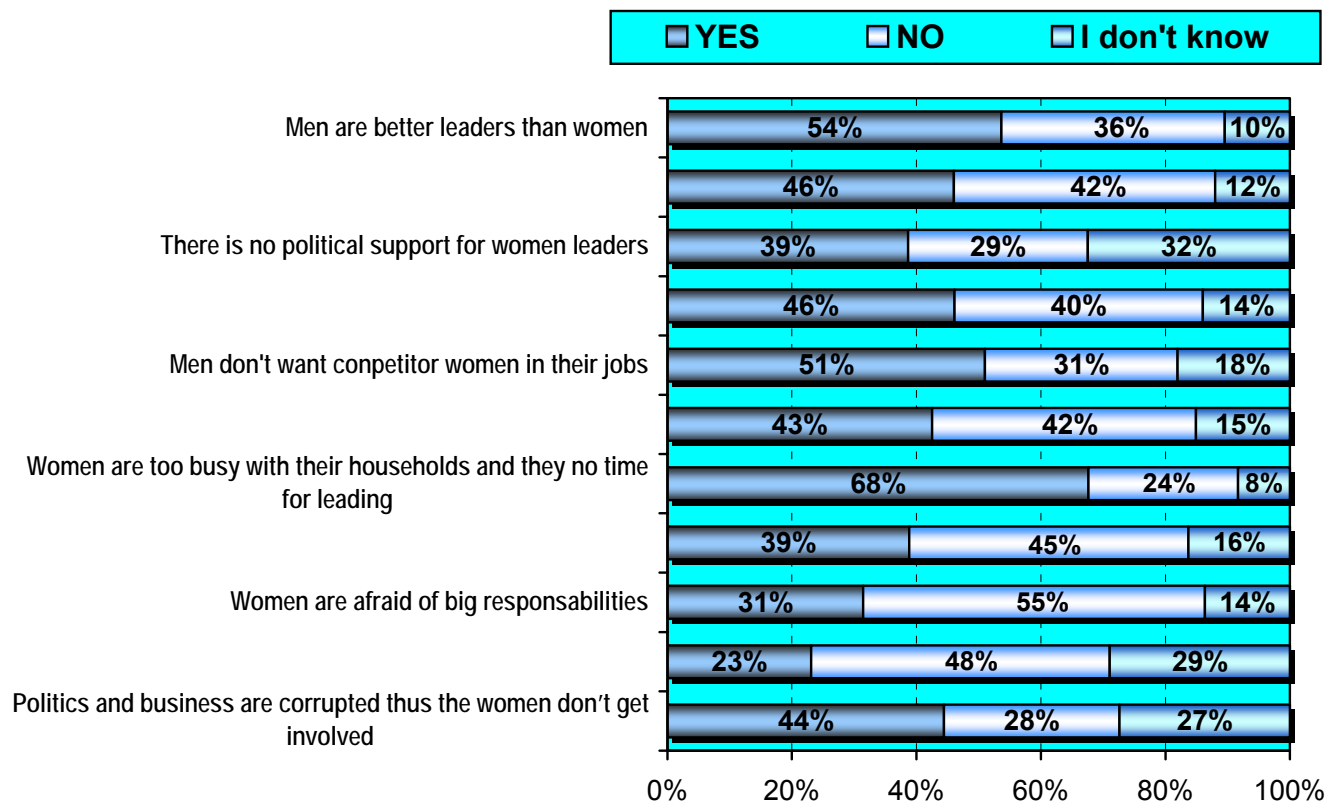


Q6: Who should lead in the public life?



Q7: Do you consider that?





Some of the identified *barriers* to active citizenship of rural women presented in the Rural Euro Barometer December 2002 (Open Society Foundation Romania):

1. Incompetence/lack of information/ lack of capabilities when evaluating the possible consequences of a wide range of phenomenon (economic, social, political, cultural) that takes place both in Romania and EU;
2. Lack of expressing/showing different hopes and expectations;
3. The lack of a formal superior form of education (e.g. high-school or university);
4. The informal information channels (other people, direct experience) are predominant;
5. The lack of a need of permanent information and from official sources;
6. An accentuated presence of a conformation attitude;
7. The incapability to formulate their own ideas;
8. The existence of a routine in the daily life;
9. Not getting in touch on a daily basis with advance technology;
10. Very low incomes, the absence of liquidities and of a permanent non-agricultural income;
11. The absence of a diversified rural economy;
12. The inexistence or the inadequacy of the road / banking and financial infrastructure;
13. A strong attitude of the rural women against change/implication in different areas: banking, finance, assurance, reducing thereby their opportunities on the labor market;
14. The lack of information/trust regarding different formal and informal finance sources, which result from no economic-banking education;
15. Ignorance;
16. The impossibility to appreciate different public utility services (street lighting, street cleaning, medical services, phone services, public transport) because they don't exist in the considered area;
17. Very low interest/ inefficiency of the local public administration;
18. Overall mistrust (in people, institutions) which can be translate in a low level of association;
19. The lack of motivation, seriousness and responsibility;
20. A more male dominated community life;
21. A very low level of jobs in the non-agricultural sector;
22. A low level of constant contact with the urban area;
23. No communication modalities (phone, GSM, TV, cable, car);
24. Different levels of isolation of some communities, reducing the access to markets and services;
25. The connection between the local cultural factors (attitudes, values, traditions) and the attitude of the local people;
26. Old people majority;
27. Subsistence orientation vs market orientation.

2.2. Polish national context

Transition process in Poland

Poland faced complex changes after 1989. First of all, political changes have to be mentioned. The one – party system was replaced by pluralist one, the censorship disappeared, and democracy began to be official state ideology. Moreover, the economic transition was started. The market one has replaced the system of centrally planned economics. At the moment, the economics is not developing as rapidly as it used to be.

	1995	1999	2001
Economic growth	7%	4,15%	1,1%
GDP (constant prices) year 1990=100	110,1	135,7	142,7
inflation rate	27,8%	7,3%	5,5%
Budget revenue	83 722 million PLN	125 922 million PLN	140 527 million PLN
Budget expenditure	91 170 million PLN	138 401 million PLN	175 885 million PLN
Exports	22 894,9 million USD	27 407,4 million USD	36 092,2 million USD
Imports	29 049,7 million USD	45 911,2 million USD	50 275,1 million USD
FOREIGN DEBT	-	65 365 million USD	71 048 million USD
Population below poverty line (50% of average expenditures of Polish households)	12,8%	16,5%	17,1%

Chart 1 basic economic indicator for Poland

Also social dimension of transition process are visible. One of the main problems has been the unemployment rate, which has been rising despite the continuous economic growth. More social groups are poverty-prone. During the 1990s the percentage of people affected by poverty was constantly increasing. In 1996 as much as 46,7% of population was living below the line of social minimum, in 2001 this figure was already 57%. The percentage of population living below the minimum of existence [biological minimum] doubled between 1996 when it was 4,3% and 2001 when it reached 9,5%. Furthermore, types of households which are most affected by poverty include couples with 3 or dependent children and single parents families, with most of these being headed by women.

Work has become – especially for the younger generation- value and luxury nowadays. Those, who have jobs are afraid of losing them, suffer from instability and low incomes. Research results show that today success in labour market means first of all stability and guarantee of employment and

income. So far, higher education had guaranteed success and career. Also the youngest employees were the most successful. However, being young has become disadvantage (unemployment rate among youngsters is higher than 40%). Gender (female) also limits career opportunities.

Demographic factors influencing career opportunities are: increase of population at production age, increase in number of students, demographic boom generation entering into labour market, traditional little mobility.

Recently 2.5 increase of unemployment has been recorded. The number of highly educated increased by 40% in 1998-2002. The diploma of university (higher education institution) is no longer guarantee of success and career. Overeducation of candidates becomes limitation.

Although the studying still improve their qualifications, they are frequently not adequate to labour market demand. The rapid change of labour relations has not been accompanied by education system. Especially the adult education is scarce (only 10% employees).

The transformation of the Polish economy has affected all people in Poland but it particularly negative impact on women.

Women in Poland

Until 1989, women played an active and firm role in the workplace. Women's high employment rate resulted from not only the ideological appreciation of women's emancipation, but also from a need for women's labor in the nation's accelerated industrialization process. In addition, women's labor was needed to provide support for families that couldn't subsist with one salary. Although in times of recession, leaders stressed the role of women as childcare provider, when their labor was in demand they argued that women could only be emancipated through participation in the labor market. The fact that the previous system, by definition, created full employment prevented the visibility of gender discrimination in the labor market. However, women rarely attained management levels positions, despite the fact that their educational credentials and skills often exceeded those of men. Moreover, the high level of participation by women in the labor markets did not automatically change the model of the family to one based on partnership. Women, outside of their role in the labor market, were seen as primarily responsible for the family and expected to play a traditional role at home. This double burden imposed on women was very difficult to carry out in times of economic hardship, where citizens faced problems with providing basic supplies for the family. In fact, this burden evoked some reluctance to feminist ideology.

Since Poland's political and economic transformation in 1989, the status of women has changed drastically. A large amount of evidence shows that economic adjustments have influenced women and men differently. Although women are better educated than men amongst professionals, their position in the labor market has become much weaker. Women earn, on average, less than men and are the first to be fired and the last to be hired. Job offers are

often gender and age specific, which, in practice, discriminates against women. A woman's physical appearance is often weighed, and most offers are for secretarial positions, while men receive managerial jobs. Nonetheless, improvement is growing, as job offers are becoming more and more gender neutral. However, gender specific offers, as well as questions concerning family status, are still legal.

In the 1990s, the number of unemployed women has risen very quickly. In 1990, women constituted 50.9% of the unemployed, while in 1997; the number grew to 60.4%. Unemployed women also faced greater hardship than men because they remained unemployed longer and experienced more difficulty in finding new jobs. The number of training courses and new job openings differs significantly for men and women. The decreased access to childcare facilities and increased prices for services have seriously affected women's possibilities in the labor market, especially for those poorly paid.

Until recently, the very existence of discrimination against women has been commonly denied. Today, however, in the face of high unemployment, the gravity of discrimination against women and their unfavorable position in the labor market have been finally recognized.

Women in the labor market

Employment practices

Most employers and employees are still convinced that the free market system grants the employer the right to unlimited freedom in hiring his or her staff. Proposals limiting the right of employers to define their employment policy are seen as remnants of the communist past and its centrally planned economy, contradicting free market principles.

Employees often share this opinion and are unaware they have the right to question or challenge the employer's decision. In addition, a strongly held belief in Polish society is that men should be granted priority over women in a shortage of jobs. The stereotype that women cope better when unemployed (since lack of a job degrades men) also influences employment practices.

Consciousness of discrimination and employee rights is very low among women. Thus, although discrimination is widespread, women rarely utilize the legal channels available to counteract this phenomenon. For the reasons listed above, gender discrimination in the labor market is a very common phenomenon. Women applying for a position are expected to be better educated and have better qualifications than the males she is competing with for the job, if she is to receive an equal chance of being employed. Frequently, employers stereotypically see women as a mother and housewife and will discriminate against them in their first interview by asking questions about their family life, rather than professional qualifications. Research conducted by the Center for the Advancement of Women in Warsaw found that women are promoted less frequently than men and do not receive equal pay for work of equal value. In advertisements on job vacancies, the expected gender of the successful candidate is frequently mentioned, and those addressed to women more frequently mention age requirements. Employers

do not make secret that they prefer to employ men, as men are considered to be more stable workers in the context of the length of employment. Often employers, even if a job offer was phrased in gender-neutral language, explicitly express their preference in interviews; women are asked their age, marital status, and plans for the future. In addition, employers, contrary to the law, often request a non-pregnancy certificate or a declaration that a woman will not become pregnant for some time. Despite the laws protecting the employment of pregnant women, many women are fired during pregnancy.

Women's employment

Activity rate of women is systematically decreasing (in 1992 it was 54,2%, and in 2002 it was 48%). During the years 1992-2002 the most significant was the decrease of economic activity for age groups 18-24. A very significant drop of economic activity can be also notices among women aged 45-64. Restructuring of economy in Poland had a significant impact on the drop of economic activity of women with a low level of education (drop from 32,9% to 19,2%).

Women constituted 45% of the total employed population in 2002. At the same time, employment rate of women dropped from 46% [1992] to 38% [2002].

Notably, from 1990 to 1998, the percentage of those employed in the public sector decreased from 52.1% to 30.9% and correspondingly increased in the private sector from 47.9% to 69.1%; the number of women employed in public sector increased from 48.2% in 1994 to 50.6% in 1998 and decreased in private sector from 42.6% to 40.9% in the same period. This data, along with the high unemployment rate among women, indicates that the private sector has been less favorable to women; in the private sector gender-based discrimination may occur more frequently. The fact that wages are higher in the private sector than in the public sector also unfavorably affects the economic position of women in the society.

The self-employment of women, especially since 1994, has shown a constant and dynamic increase. Toward the end of 1988 women accounted for 37% of the employers and self-employed. A large number of women's businesses engage in trade or provide services and often, the businesses are small or family firms. Surveys conducted among female entrepreneurs indicate that women owners of businesses are most often aged 35-45, with secondary vocational education and that the main incentive for self -employment is not only the need to increase the family's income, but also the need for independence, autonomy, and utilization of skills.

Specification T - total W - women	1990 XII	1995 XII	1996 XII	1997 IX	1998 VIII	1999 II
Total W	16484.7 7457.6	15485.7 7154.8	15841.9 7390.0	16294.5 7598.0	15608 6976	14941 6776
Public sector T	8582.7	5979.7	5767.0	5426.5	5896	5673

W	3756.9	2941.6	2888.8	2768.8	2981	2892
Private sector T	7902.0	9506.0	10074.9	10868.0	9712	9268
W	3700.7	4213.2	4501.2	4820.2	3995	3894

Chart 2: Economic Activity of the Population Aged 15 and More by Education
- February 1999

Education of employed women

The fact that professionally active women are better educated than men has never been adequately reflected in their position in the labor market. Data provided by the Central Statistical Office (GUS) shows that more than fifty-four (54.8%) percent of women and only 35.4% of men receive a minimum secondary level education. and 11.1% and 9% respectively received a higher education. Women have rarely attained management level positions, in both the previous regime and the new democracy. The fact that women are better educated and less associated with the previous managerial cadre (nomenklatura) has not influenced their chances of promotion in the nineties. Nonetheless, although employed women are generally better educated, their qualifications and skills are often not well adapted to the needs of the market economy.

Specification	Grand total	Economically active persons				Economically inactive persons	Activity rate	Employment rate
		Total	Employed		Unemployed			
			Total	Of which full-time employees				
	In thousands						In %	
Total	30137	17082	14941	13316	2141	13055	56.7	49.6
Men - education:								
Tertiary	1213	1004	975	914	30	209	82.8	80.4
Post-secondary as well as technical and vocational secondary	2991	2331	2137	2001	195	660	78.95	73.2
General secondary	603	297	259	230	38	306	49.3	43.0
Basic vocational	4947	3958	3432	3202	526	989	80.0	69.4
Primary and incomplete primary	4589	1660	1362	1118	298	2929	36.2	29.7

Women - education:								
Tertiary	1327	1065	1026	920	38	262	80.3	77.3
Post-secondary as well as technical and vocational secondary	3679	2638	2334	2141	304	1041	75.25	67.25
General secondary	1619	794	678	595	116	825	40.0	41.9
Basic vocational	3159	2013	1640	1412	373	1146	63.7	51.9
Primary and incomplete primary	6009	1321	1097	782	224	4688	22.0	18.3

chart 3: Economic Activity of the Population Aged 15 and More by Education - February 1999

Because of the significant disparity in women and men's educational backgrounds, they enter the labour market with different qualifications and skills. The difference has significantly impacted on the types of jobs performed and sectors in which men and women are employed. At the professional level, women make up a large percentage of the workforce in finance, insurance, medicine, health, and social services. They also constitute a large percentage of employees in light manufacturing, particularly in textile, clothing, and electro-mechanical industries. Women also constitute the majority of office administrative jobs.

Payment Inequalities

Despite constitutional guarantees of equal pay, government statistics indicate that gender-based discrimination persists in matters of remuneration. Due to cultural norms, social traditions, and the fact that it is more difficult for women to find adequate employment, they often accept lower paid positions to earn an income. Data of the Central Statistical Office from August 1998 indicate the national average salary for a woman was a mere 82% of an average man's salary. Notably, in enterprises that employ more than 500 persons, women's salaries constitute only 69% of an average man's salaries. (GUS, Employment in National Economy by Salaries in September 1997, Warsaw 1998). Among people who earn less than the average salary, 75% are women while only 25% are men; among those who earn the highest salaries, men constitute 80% and women only 20%. The professions with the largest wage gap are the mining industry, trade and repair work, and investment trading. Women in the mining industry earn 63% of men's salary, while in the other three sectors, women earn, on average 74% of men's salaries.

Occupational Groups	Fully employed in %			Average gross monthly income in PLN		
	total	men	women	total	Men	women
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	849.74	943.26	747.24
Legislators, senior officials and managers	5.1	5.7	4.6	1545.47	1725.35	1301.80
Professionals	15.7	10.2	21.9	1006.07	1217.51	898.40
Physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals	2.2	3.1	1.3	1291.67	1394.27	1034.49
Life science and health professionals	1.7	1.2	2.1	1069.73	1207.09	980.96
Teaching professionals	7.3	3.0	12.2	781.72	883.65	754.65
Other professionals	4.5	2.9	6.3	1205.23	1373.43	1119.63
Technician and associate professionals	14.7	9.5	20.3	868.80	1054.55	773.71
Physical and engineering science associate professionals	5.4	6.7	4.0	992.90	1100.91	794.02
Life science and health associate professionals	3.9	0.8	7.3	691.01	864.10	671.02
Other associate professionals	5.2	1.8	8.9	876.38	992.15	850.25
Clerks	10.7	4.7	17.2	773.68	814.51	761.38
Office clerks	8.4	4.3	12.9	772.90	801.36	762.48
Customer service clerks	2.3	0.4	4.3	776.51	946.04	758.12
Service, workers and shop and market sales workers	6.0	3.5	8.7	591.34	746.82	521.40
Personal and protective services workers	3.2	2.5	3.6	656.47	792.01	556.21
Models, salespersons and demonstrators	2.8	1.0	4.9	519.26	630.66	494.29
Craft and related trades workers	24.1	37.5	9.5	815.15	872.08	567.93
Extraction and building trades workers	5.2	9.6	0.4	936.96	946.85	675.58
Metal machinery and related trades workers	12.5	22.8	1.2	887.75	895.47	724.93

Other craft and related trades workers	5.8	4.5	7.3	559.45	601.26	531.30
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	12.9	20.2	4.9	831.75	855.12	726.11
Stationary plant and related operators	3.0	5.0	0.8	930.73	954.83	770.93
Machine operators and assemblers	3.7	4.1	3.2	780.71	837.10	700.61
Drivers and mobile plant operators	6.2	11.1	0.9	814.04	816.91	775.14
Elementary occupations	10.3	8.0	12.7	576.81	652.80	524.17
Sales and services elementary occupations	6.8	3.7	10.2	525.75	591.04	499.50

Chart 4: Full-time Paid Employment and Average Gross Wages and Salaries by Occupational Groups for March 1996

Women's unemployment

The percentage of women among the unemployed has steadily increased over the last years; in 1990, women constituted 50.9% of the unemployed. At the end of 2002 women constituted 47,7% of the total of the unemployed, with the level of unemployment among women [20.6%] higher than in case of man [19%].

Unemployed women face more difficulty than men do because they tend to remain without jobs longer and run into more problems finding new positions. Nearly twice as many men find employment within a month; in contrast, of the total unemployed registered in September 1997, 72% of those without a job for over twelve months were women. In fact, nearly half of all jobless women have been unemployed for a year or more. In addition, the duration of unemployment increases with a woman's age. For women between the ages 30 and 34, unemployment lasts for 17 months; for older women aged 35 to 44 and 45 to 54, it is 18.3 and 19 months, respectively. The duration of unemployment is the shortest for women with higher education (an average 6.4 months), and the longest for women with only an elementary education (18 months).

The largest group of unemployed women consists of those under the age of 25, while the smallest percentage comprises those over 45. An analysis of educational levels shows that women with vocational and secondary vocational education face the most difficulty in finding a job.

Women's attitude towards employment

A report by the Center for Social Research in December 1996, entitled "Gender Equality in Professional Life" questioned women on their attitudes towards their employment. Many women responded that they faced a higher risk in losing their jobs than men and experienced more difficulty finding employment. Many also believed that as they became more educated. The

visibility of inequality increased in the workplace. Additionally, the women stated that only by owning their own companies and developing independent careers could they escape the inequality in the workplace. When asked why women have fewer job opportunities than men, most women answered that the burden of work in the home coupled with work in the job market made it more difficult for them to achieve a professional status equal to men. Many women noted that the stereotypical role of women as a homemaker results in unfounded discrimination in the workplace. As employers and co-workers are unable to see women as professional employees and view them solely as mothers and wives.

When questioned about balancing their professional and private lives. Most women responded that the ideal situation is for an equal partnership with their husbands sharing responsibilities in the home. Eighty-four percent of professional women responded that their jobs provide them with a great deal of satisfaction. And 65% said they did not feel at risk of losing their jobs. Over half of the women questioned said they would not quit their jobs even if they could afford to do so. Thirty-four percent of university graduates questioned under age 24 said they believed they have the same skills as men. And have the same opportunities for employment as their male peers. A higher percentage responded that they were unsure about their qualifications. And did not know how their gender affected their employment opportunities.

Even though 37% of women believed they were not paid an equal amount with men. When questioned about their salaries. 43% said they believed their chances of promotion and a raise were equal. In fact the more highly educated women believed they did not face discrimination in pay. Seventeen percent of women believed they were discriminated against in both promotion opportunities and salary increases. While 14% responded that they did not feel a gender bias at work. Only 1% believed they were promoted or received a raise specifically due to being a woman. Despite these figures the majority of women in this study could not determine if they had ever been discriminated against in promotional opportunities or salary increases.

The report concluded that most women derive great satisfaction from their work; they view employment not as an obligation, but rather a source of fulfillment. However. The report made no findings that women expect to be promoted as quickly as men, despite their equal performance, nor did they expect to fall into the highest salary levels. Finally the report concluded that women's overall satisfaction with their jobs depends on three factors: their educational level and qualifications, their salaries and if they perceived themselves as being discriminated against.

This report as well as the International Informational Forum held in Warsaw in November. 1996 entitled "Inequality Between Men and Women in the Labor Market." finds that women in Poland, despite the Labor Code's prohibition against gender discrimination do in fact face a gender bias in the workplace. Women encounter larger rates of unemployment, despite higher levels of education and earn less for equal work.

Professional Goals: in a discussion based on 1997 statistics from the Center for Social Research 54% of women questioned claimed that the best way to balance family and professional lives is for each spouse to contribute equally to both household and professional responsibilities. Thirty percent responded that the husband should be the sole breadwinner and the wife should be responsible for working in the home. Fifteen percent said that although both men and women should work outside the home women are responsible for the household if the husband spends more time at work.

When asked about the changing workplace atmosphere many women responded that in a market economy they must work longer hours and experience greater pressures to be more emotionally connected and involved in their work than they were before. Eighteen percent responded that this kind of atmosphere has a detrimental effect on their home life, while a quarter said that the advantages and disadvantages were equal. The latter group includes highly educated women (those who have completed university studies), single women ages 25 to 34 and women in professional decision-making positions. Most women polled. However there was said that the advantages of this atmosphere outweighed the disadvantages. Of those questioned students, women under 24 years old, divorced women, women working on farms, partially disabled women and women involved in liberal politics overwhelmingly responded that they are able to balance work and home life with ease. Women over 50 years old, retired women, women who are heavily involved in church life and politically conservative women all responded that the disadvantages of this work environment outweighed the advantages and produces a detrimental effect of family life.

Among all Polish women only 34% work outside the home; the majority are homemakers. Those women who enter the workforce believe they are at greater risk of losing their jobs than their male counterparts because of their dual roles as homemaker and professional. However since 1994 women have increasingly felt their position in the labor market stabilize. Today, 60% of professional women no longer feel their jobs are in jeopardy. This is especially true for women over 45 years who own their own businesses. However the remaining 30% continue to feel their jobs are at risk, particularly those with low-levels of education. The study also found that a quarter of all workingwomen is in a decision-making position and overwhelmingly feels their jobs are secure. For those not in decision-making positions when asked if they would accept this sort of job, only 28% responded they would, while 59% responded that they would not. The main reasons given by those declining the position were that they believed they lacked the qualifications and abilities necessary for the job, they did not want the responsibility of the position, they would feel uncomfortable giving direction to employees, they would not have sufficient time to dedicate to the job because of household responsibilities, they did not want to create bad relationships at work by being in a power position and they felt that women generally should not be in decision-making positions. Those women who responded that they would accept a decision-making position gave reasons such as they would earn more money, they believed they were qualified for the position and did not fear the responsibility, they believed they were capable of giving direction to employees, they had

the requisite experience, they could foster good working relationships, their family lives were not so demanding as to consume a large amount of their time and they felt it important for women to be active in traditionally male-dominated positions.

This report concluded that more women today believe that their professional lives influence their family lives and that their jobs are more secure. For those women polled the biggest change in recent years is that the role of women, as homemaker no longer receives the same respect as it once did. Most felt that in order to be respected in society today, they must hold professional positions.

Lodz City and its region – local factors influencing women's situation

Lodz is a traditional centre for textile industry in Poland. Textile industry went into decline rapidly at the beginning of economic transition. The economy has partly recovered, mainly by the production of cheap articles, not involving the demand for qualified workforce. Textiles and clothes production is still the main branch of employment in Lodz and its region – 46% employees work for those sectors. The companies in region are small or middle-sized ones [msp] and employ 73 % employees [comparing to 61% in Poland] In 1999 country product per capita for Lodz was 91% of general Polish level [14497 in Lodz and 15907 for total Poland] Average salary in Lodz is 17% lower comparing to total [1787 PLN in Lodz comparing to 2026 in Poland]. Lodz is the city with the lowest salary.

The economic position of Lodz region has worsened during transition period, resulting in difficulties in labour market due to:

- Little attractiveness for investors,
- Bad condition of existing companies,
- Lack of new workplaces,
- Recession in textile industry,
- Redundancies as a result of reforms and restructuring,
- Decline in trade with former USRR,
- Difficulties in industry restructuring,
- Little demand for work.
- Little participation of foreign capital.

As a result: the unemployment rate in Lodz is higher than average, the number of long-term unemployment increasing and the number of unemployed entitled to the dole decreasing. The period of job searching is comparatively long. The groups especially unemployment-prone are: young and women. Although the unemployment rate among women is lower than average, these are women who are more frequently long-term unemployed.

The level of pay in Lodz is relatively low. The conditions of work are bad and the level of black market employment considerable.

As a result the process of pauperisation in Lodz is more advanced than in other urban regions in Poland. Poverty is alarming because of its scale and permanent character.

2.3. Italian / regional context

Regione Marche



Introduction to the immigrants' situation

The most important feature of current immigration in Italy is the process of stabilisation of the phenomenon: immigrants, which are becoming a significant and most relevant element of Italian society. The last statistic data related to the importance of the presence of immigrants and mostly the examination of the social reality they live show a growing process and a rooting of the phenomenon. In less than 10 years the number of regular immigrants has doubled and the characteristics of the immigrants have sensibly changed. The number of people married has grown and a more equilibrated relation between sexes is evidenced. This means relevant repercussions for migratory policy, in particular for the reception policy, social policy for immigrants. The composition of the immigrants' presence according to the different nationalities and changes is shown in the following table:

Table 1 – The first 20 nationalities in Italy divided by sex. Years 1992 – 2003.

1992			1996			2003		
Countries	MF	% F	Countries	MF	% F	Countries	MF	% F
Morocco	83.292	9,8	Morocco	81.247	21,7	Morocco	155.864	27,7
Tunisia	41.547	9,0	Ex Yugoslavia	73.538	35,4	Albania	133.018	34,0
Philippine	36.316	67,2	Philippine	36.007	69,9	Ex Yugoslavia	92.791	39,5
Ex Yugoslavia	26.727	37,1	Tunisia	30.666	16,9	Philippine	67.386	66,2
Albania	24.886	14,1	Albania	30.183	32,7	Romania	61.212	48,9
Senegal	24.194	2,9	Senegal	20.816	5,6	China	56.660	45,1
Egypt	18.473	14,2	China	16.200	44,8	Tunisia	46.773	22,1
China	15.776	39,8	Sri Lanka	16.010	43,0	Senegal	40.890	7,1
Poland	12.139	55,7	Egypt	15.530	23,9	Egypt	34.042	17,9
Sri Lanka	12.114	31,0	Romania	14.212	69,3	Sri Lanka	31.991	42,7
Ghana	11.303	31,0	Poland	13.955	64,9	Poland	29.478	70,5
Brazil	10.953	68,6	Brazil	12.985	73,7	Peru	29.074	68,1
India	9.918	43,0	India	11.984	52,5	India	27.568	36,9
Argentina	9.603	52,4	Ghana	10.010	36,4	Nigeria	20.056	57,6
Somalia	9.265	61,4	Somalia	9.047	66,7	Ghana	19.972	34,6
Romania	8.250	58,0	Peru	8.001	72,0	Bangladesh	18.980	13,3
Ethiopia	7.615	66,0	Rep. Dominican	6.398	88,4	Brazil	18.888	73,3
Iran	6.821	34,6	Colombia	5.908	72,8	Pakistan	17.237	12,6
Peru	5.022	63,7	Argentina	5.873	56,4	Algeria	13.413	11,8
Ex USSR	3.716	72,9	Iran	5.802	36,7	Russia	13.399	75,7
Total	648.935	39,9	Total	729.159	47,3	Total	1.340.655	45,3

Source: Elaboration on ISTAT data, Rome

Data show that pre-existent nationalities have changed, with a huge growth of people coming from Eastern Europe, which have represented the most

significant element of the last 10 years. At the same time it is possible to see a considerable presence of North African people: the Moroccan people are the most representative people in Italy. Another important feature is the female presence.

In the last 10 years the female presence has grown: from about 40% in 1992 to more than 45% in 2003. This increase means a light reduction of the strong gender connotation of the various nationalities. As an example the Moroccan female presence was of 9% in 1992 and in 2003 it is of more than 27%. It is the same for other nationalities with low female presence as Tunisia and Albania. It is important to notice that female presence is an important characteristic element of migratory models for different nationalities: its various distribution inside the national communities contributes to set up in different ways the stabilisation processes between immigrants with the same nationality in Italy.

The prevalence of stay permits issued for work in all geographical areas is an evidence of *work migrations* in Italy, as for the fact that the number of stay permits left for work motivations in constant increasing confirms the nature and the characteristic of the migration phenomenon. The new and significant feature is the increasing number of requests of stay permits for familiar reasons, clear expression of stabilisation phenomenon.

The stabilization process and its indicators

Tendency towards balancing the population is considerable, in particular the presence of women or other family members, which arrived to reunite the family. Among the most relevant we have noticed the make up according to the gender. From the beginning the totality of the immigrants in Italy presented a peculiar regularity since the number of women was not as high as the number of men. This apparent regularity became immediately misleading since some communities were composed exclusively by women (women mainly employed as maids coming from the Philippines, from Eritrea or from countries belonging to Latin America), while others (mainly came from Maghrebi communities and in general coming from Islamic countries) were almost exclusively males.

Now the situation has changed. It is true that in some communities' young adult males still prevail and in others females are still prevailing, but in general there is a greater balance in all the communities. This is partly due to the fact that some communities of more recent settlement already move with their families or with a prospective to shortly reunite all the family. In all the communities family reunions have had a relevant weight.

As an expression of stabilisation process even the high number of weddings among foreigners and mainly the increase of mixed couples should be mentioned. The process is by now noticeable and is well registered by the documentation of personal data. Naturally also the number of children born from foreigners or having at least a foreign parent is increasing strongly.

The ethnical-cultural polycentrism

As far as the internal composition by gender is concerned, it could be noticed that according to the group, a different connotation, although it somehow seems to assume a less noticeable characteristic in respect to the past:

Among the first ten biggest communities women are most present in the Rumanian community (64%), in the German (58%) and in the Polish (64%); There are instead more men amongst the people from Senegal (almost uniquely men with a 90%), the Tunisians (63%), the Macedonians (62%), the Moroccans (60%), the Yugoslavians (58%) and the Albanians (57%), while the Chinese community presents a relatively smaller male presence (53%).

Table 2 Main nationalities present in the Marche Region (31/12/2003) (absolute values and percentages)

Nationality	Total foreigners in Marche		Total foreigners in Italy	Foreign women in Marche
	N°	% of the regional total*	% on the national total*	% on the total
Albanian	7.163	17.2 (1)	10.6 (2)	43.2
Moroccan	6.441	15.5 (2)	11.6 (1)	40.2
Macedonian	3.957	9.5 (3)	1.7 (18)	38.1
Tunisians	2246	5.4 (4)	3.4 (6)	37.2
Rumanian	1691	4.1 (5)	5.5 (3)	64.2
Yugoslavian	1412	3.4 (6)	2.7 (8)	42.2
China	958	2.3 (7)	4.2 (5)	46.6
Senegal	931	2.2 (8)	2.6 (10)	10.1
German	926	2.2 (9)	2.6 (9)	58.0
Polish	829	2.0 (10)	2.2 (12)	63.9
Others	15008	36.1	52.9 (49.1)**	53.4
Total	41562	100	100	44.1

Marche are characterised in Italy for a strong concentration of immigrants with a limited number of nationalities.

* In parenthesis the placement in the classification in terms of related numbers

** Value in parenthesis referred to the weight of the percentage of all the nationalities present except for the first ten, which are for importance

Source: SIS Regione Marche su dati Istat

Immigrants and the working market in Italy: workers, carers and other

In the working area Marche are known for a strong ability of including immigrants in the leading areas of economy and in particular in industries thus offering them a chance of integration. Within this positive picture though three critical points are noticed. The first one already mentioned is related to the living problem which is becoming more and more a pressing problem for the foreign workers and therefore for the relative enterprises. A second theme is related to training the immigrants as far as tasks to be done inside enterprises

are concerned. A last problematic element which is not of secondary importance concerns the immigrated women, which are often too “segregated” in some types of work in the tertiary sector (cleaning, services to people, etc.) and they have difficulty to find employment in different branches of the working market.

We have already indicated as female immigration historically represented an important component of the Italian migration experience. The lack of welfare system, intersected with the demand of an increasing number of old aged people have always required immigrant workers, which do not only have the required personal features but even sometimes a qualification as a nurse or as an assistant. This was already noticeable during the past years, but it became more and more noticeable during the most recent years due to the change occurred in welfare mix and even with a decrease of the families in facing the need of assistance which is becoming more and more pressing due to the ageing of population. This is how the word carer enters into the vocabulary of the Italian language, which is of uncertain origin, or if it is a new term. It is not present in the law amendments and it has an implicit derogatory connotation because it reduces the qualified assistance functions to a role of pure presence and control. On the other hand though it is interesting how this new term underlines that it is not only staff for activities meant for domestic family collaboration.

The requests of regulating according to the new sanitary see firstly the assisting family staff together with domestic help followed by workers.

AUTOCERTIFIED – Province of Pesaro Urbino				
	Pesaro	Fano	Urbino	Totale
Males	2.303	2.059	1.185	5.547
Females	4.072	4.334	2.189	10.595
Total	6.375	6.393	3.374	16.142
Extractions from February 29/04 done on 13 march 04 - Paolo Carloni				

Autoc. extracomunitari - Provincia Pesaro Urbino				
	Pesaro	Fano	Urbino	Total
Females	279	149	191	619
Extraction from April 30/04 done on April 29/04 - Paolo Carloni				

The active role of women

The immigrated women do not only live between two cultures, but they are obliged to face and elaborate the liens and the restrictions they undergo in their original countries and to develop new behavior methods, which are

neither those of the original countries nor the accepting ones. They are asked to reinterpret the female role and often their role inside the family nucleus. They are asked to build a bridge between the families, when it is present, of the belonging community and the work belonging to “public” life of the hosting country.

This tension destroys the women bringing them to a social disintegration, which generates in her an uncertain situation and isolation, which often turns, into strong physical uneasiness and psychosomatic illnesses.

The changing process, which characterizes the immigrated women, does not invest only her, but the entire group, the belonging cultural system. This changing process is articulated and the woman has to face a necessity and aspirations, which are contradictory, she has to safeguard her identity as women and also her national identity as well as her desire of emancipation.

These tensions originate different types of behavior, which can be grouped into four main typologies:

- The fight against assimilation
- A temporary adaptation to changes in order to carry out their own economical project
- An adaptation to the new models which remains theoretical because of the opposition of their own entourage
- A voluntary articulation, which is not without conflicts.

Another element of the Italian reality is composed of the presence of women as an element of stabilization of fluxes, since they activate family reunion. Women are an important part of the processes of fluxes towards stabilization. First they prepare the basis, then they contribute to family reunion, and then they start to create mixed couples, legally legitimate.



The comparative methodological guide contains relevant information regarding the steps that shall be taken by institutions / organizations dealing with women in their attempt to motivate them to accede adult education courses. The adult education courses directions that we envisaged, as hypothesis were:

1. Flexibility and mobility as far as employment concerns
2. New competencies in the areas of ICT, “services to people”, commercial service sector, new technologies, languages, communication, fashion, arts and crafts
3. Personal skills: self esteem, entrepreneurship, self-motivation, attitude towards learning
4. New abilities: team working, work discipline, stress and conflict management, and independence

These educational directions apply for both disadvantaged target groups (unemployed or on the verge of being unemployed and immigrant), as they will play a more central and influential role in the development, leadership and management of regions and local communities as well as private businesses alongside with men both in rural and urban context.

The methods used in the project were *focus group* (working in the field with the target group and with the representatives of interest institutions), and *field* research.

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